

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJ: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT MARILYN BERGER FRONT PAGE BYLINER
SATURDAY, MAY 11, WASHINGTON POST HEADLINED "MIDEAST
ACCORD NOW HELD LIKELY."

2. SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER RETURNED HERE
TODAY WITH INCREASED OPTIMISM THAT A SYRIAN-ISRAELI
DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED DURING THE NEXT
WEEK.

3. A SENIOR U.S. OFFICIAL, WHO UNTIL TODAY HAD BEEN SAYING
THE PROSPECTS OF A SETTLEMENT WERE LESS THAN 50 PER CENT,
TODAY PUT THE ODDS AT 52 TO 48 IN FAVOR OF SUCCESS. THE
ESTIMATE CAME FROM A MAN WHO HAS CONSISTENTLY UNDERSTATED
THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS IN ANY NEGOTIATION.

4. (LATER, WIRE SERVICES QUOTED KISSINGER AS SAYING,
"THERE IS PROGRESS. WE ARE NOW GOING THROUGH A DETAILED
EXAMINATION OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT."
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IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THE SECRETARY SPOKE FOR DIRECT

ATTRIBUTION ABOUT THE TALKS.)

5. BY TUESDAY, FOLLOWING A TRIP TO DAMASCUS SUNDAY AND ANOTHER ROUND-TRIP-JERUSALEM-DAMASCUS SHUTTLE MONDAY AND TUESDAY, THE OFFICIAL SAID IT WOULD BECOME CLEAR WHETHER KISSINGER WOULD DECIDE TO GO HOME, REGISTERING PARTIAL PROGRESS, OR STAY THROUGH THE WEEK TO WORK OUT THE WHOLE DEAL.

6. FOLLOWING AN HOUR AND A HALF MEETING WITH ISRAELI OFFICIALS HERE LATE THIS AFTERNOON, INFORMATION MINISTER SHIMON PERES WAS OPTIMISTIC AND SAID: "IF THERE IS AN AGREEMENT, IT MAY BE A QUICK ONE. BY THE END OF THE COMING WEEK, WE MAY HAVE THE RESULTS OF THE SECRETARY'S VERY ACTIVE ITINERARY."

7. DEPUTY PREMIER YIGAL ALLON, ONE OF THE ISRAELI OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, SAID BEFORE LEAVING ON A TRIP TO LONDON THAT THE CHANCES FOR AN AGREEMENT HAD "DEFINITELY IMPROVED" AND THAT HE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF ONE WERE REACHED SOON.

8. ACCORDING TO REPORTS CIRCULATING HERE, PRESIDENT NIXON REGISTERED HIS EAGERNESS FOR AN AGREEMENT IN ONE OR MORE PERSONAL LETTERS TO ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER GOLDA MEIR, URGING HER TO GRASP THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT NOW. IN THE DEEPENING WATERGATE CRISIS, MR. NIXON IS CLEARLY IN NEED OF A FOREIGN POLICY SUCCESS.

9. KISSINGER SPENT YESTERDAY AND TODAY LINING UP FORCES IN SUPPORT FOR A DEAL. HE LEFT SAUDI ARABIA LATE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON WITH WHAT AMOUNTED TO A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FROM KING FAISAL.

10. TODAY, HE WON ANOTHER VOTE FROM EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR SADAT, WHOM HE MET IN CAIRO. SADAT HAS BEEN A CHIEF ALLY THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS, LARGELY BECAUSE THE SUCCESS OF HIS OWN POLICY OF ACCOMMODATION WITH ISRAEL IS AT LEAST PARTIALLY DEPENDENT ON GETTING A DISENGAGEMENT UNCLASSIFIED

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OF FORCES ON THE SYRIAN FRONT.

11. A SENIOR OFFICIAL ON THE KISSINGER PLANE SAID SADAT AGREED WITH KISSINGER THAT PROGRESS IS BEING MADE, AND THAT HE THINKS THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER PROGRESS. THE OFFICIAL SAID SADAT WAS "VERY, VERY CONSTRUCTIVE."

12. IN A DEPARTURE FROM WHAT HAS BECOME CUSTOM IN

KISSINGER VISITS TO EGYPT, SADAT AND THE SECRETARY DID NOT

SPEAK WITH NEWSMEN IN A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE.

13. IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT KISSINGER WAS IN TOO GREAT A HURRY TO REMAIN FOR TALKS WITH REPORTERS, BECAUSE HE HAD TO GET TO JERUSALEM TO MEET WITH ISRAELI LEADERS BEFORE SUNSET AND THE BEGINNING OF THE JEWISH SABBATH. BECAUSE OF INTENSE RELIGIOUS PRESSURE FROM ORTHODOX JEWS, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT CANNOT GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF WORKING ON THE SABBATH.

14. ON HIS ARRIVAL HERE, KISSINGER WENT DIRECTLY IN TO A MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER GOLDA MEIR AND THE GROUP THAT HAS BEEN HAMMERING OUT THE DISENGAGEMENT PROPOSALS CONVEYED TO DAMASCUS AND DISCUSSED WITH SAUDI AND EGYPTIAN LEADERS.

15. SYRIA HAS BEEN THE MOST INTRANSIGENT OF ALL THE ARAB FRONTLINE STATES IN ITS OPPOSITION TO ISRAEL. BUT THERE HAVE BEEN INCREASING SIGNS THAT THE DAMASCUS GOVERNMENT IS PREPARING TO STRIKE A DEAL.

16. WHEREAS THE SYRIAN PRESS AND RADIO AT FIRST EITHER IGNORED OR MENTIONED ONLY IN PASSING THE KISSINGER VISITS, THERE IS NOW FULLER COVERAGE. SYRIANS ARE BEING TOLD THAT HE IS THERE TO HELP WORK OUT AN AGREEMENT ON A DISENGAGEMENT OF FORCES.

17. ANOTHER SIGN CAME SEVERAL WEEKS AGO WHEN PRESIDENT HAFEZ ASSAD REPORTEDLY ORDERED RADICAL PALESTINIAN GUERRILLA GROUPS LIVING NEAR THE SYRIAN BORDER TO MOVE BACK.

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18. FINALLY, THERE ARE REPORTS THAT ASSAD HAS CALLED FOR AN ARAB SUMMIT. WHILE IT IS STILL NOT CLEAR WHETHER THIS IS TRUE, IT IS BELIEVED THAT ASSAD MAY NOT WANT TO GO AHEAD WITH AN AGREEMENT WITHOUT ARAB ENDORSEMENT.

19. THE FACT THAT ASSAD MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT SAYING THAT PROGRESS WAS ACHIEVED DURING KISSINGER'S VISIT TO DAMASCUS WEDNESDAY LENT CREDENCE TO THIS RATHER THAN TO A SECOND INTERPRETATION THAT HE WAS CALLING FOR A SUMMIT TO STEP UP ARAB PRESSURE ON ISRAEL.

20. KISSINGER IS TAKING MOST OF THE DAY OFF SATURDAY FOR RELAXATION AND POSSIBLY SOME SIGHTSEEING, PRESUMABLY TO PERMIT TIME FOR THE ARABS HE HAS MET WITH TO EXERT WHATEVER INFLUENCE THEY HAVE ON SYRIA. MEANWHILE, ISRAELI

OFFICIALS WILL HAVE TIME TO REFLECT ON THE REPORT HE GAVE
THEM TODAY ON HIS TALKS IN SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT.

(END TEXT.) RUSH

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